

WHY THE OPERA CAN NEVER BE A TEMPLE OF TRUE ART

OPERA OF THE WEEK.

Metropolitan Opera House.
MONDAY—"Aida." Mmes. Rappold and Homer; Messrs. Martinelli, Amato and Scott.
WEDNESDAY—"The Taming of the Shrew." Mmes. Ober and Rappold; Messrs. Whitehill, Sembach and Goritz.
THURSDAY, 2 P. M.—"Lohengrin." Mmes. Ober and Rappold; Messrs. Whitehill, Sembach and Goritz.
THURSDAY, 8:15 P. M.—"La Sonnambula." Mme. Barrientos; Messrs. Damasco and Dider.
FRIDAY, 8:15 P. M.—"Madame Sans-Gene." Mme. Farrar; Messrs. Martinelli, Amato and De Segura.
SATURDAY, 2 P. M.—"Samson et Dalila." Mmes. Homer; Messrs. Caruso and Amato.
SATURDAY, 7:45 P. M.—"Die Walkure." Mmes. Galski, Kurt and Ober; Messrs. Sembach, Braun and Ruyssdal.

By W. J. HENDERSON.

IF the Metropolitan Opera House were a concentration of the musical life of this town it would be an inspiring study and one filled with instruction. But the true musical life of the metropolis slips silently past the brilliant and restless social vortex at Broadway and Thirty-ninth street. Not that the people who constitute the real musical public of the city do not go to the opera—they do—but they are a negligible minority of the audience and they have no perceptible influence on the repertoire or the selection of singers or the character of the performances.

The opera house is a cosmopolis. It is a place of amusement. And it is a social hall. But it is not in the nature of things never can be a temple of art. One should not expect it to be. No opera house except the two or three devoted to special festival seasons, as in Munich and Bayreuth, can be exclusively and supremely an art enterprise.

Of course the Germans wish us to believe that every little Stadttheater in their fatherland is an art temple and that all the people who reverently listen to the indescribable howlings and screechings in their concert halls (pardon, Kunsthallen). But it is by means of the opera that the German beer sellers and leather goods dealers and other small shopkeepers and similar people of a provincial German town form a public capable of recognizing the best in music and its performance.

So the Stadttheater is not invariably a Hagen Sophia of the music drama. One can hear some of the worst performances of opera in the German towns. Nothing could be more deplorable than the hopelessly bad singing, the burlesque attitude toward the lyric drama as a whole, the shoe-maker method of treating the music, the point of view in the conception than one finds in the minor German theatre.

But whatever the shortcomings of the whole thing may be it is all German. In New York the opera house is not possessed of any determining characteristics. Its atmosphere changes when the type of opera is changed. This is something which should never be forgotten, for it signifies much in any survey of the musical situation in this city.

In the first place the focus of attraction in the Metropolitan is Enrico Caruso. Wisecracks in the corridors discuss with excited faces and gestures the comparative values of singers, but the real opera-goer does not hate a single Italian. Those who have offices where one can purchase seats for any performance always make Caruso their headline. One of the big dealers always advertises "Seats for Caruso in Carmen."

Now Mr. Caruso is primarily an Italian singer and he heard often in Italian operas. For this reason that part of the repertoire which is not German centres around him. But what is of more importance in its bearing on the present line of reflection is the character of the audience which goes to the opera on Caruso nights, and secondarily on all Italian opera nights.

These audiences contain an almost incalculably small percentage of those who will be found in the house when a German opera is given. The subscribers of course may be regarded as a fixed quantity, although many of them give away their seats when the opera is not to their taste and others arrive very late and depart early.

But the standards and the purchases of single seats in all parts of the house are entirely different. The sum total of result is that when "Aida" is sung the audience is characteristically Italian, plus a small company of utterly indifferent persons who go to the opera because it is given and who are for the most part bored by anything.

Those who learned opera at the Academy of Music fervently dislike all the "modern" things. Those who began their operatic culture in the days of German lyric drama under Stanton and Seldi get their only real satisfaction from the Wagnerian repertoire. Those who began in the great days of the De Reszkes, Kames, Melba, Sembrich, Nordica, Patti and Maurel get little comfort from anything because they have the misfortune to know that most of what they hear at the Metropolitan is not singing, but undisciplined bellowing.

And so the audiences at the opera have no fixed character or taste. And there you are.

At this moment one is reminded of the prevalent passion for extremes. Observe the behavior of any opera audience. Its applause is invariably bestowed upon an extravaganza of some kind. If Mr. Caruso sings a high B flat at the end of an air, great applause. If Mr. Amato roars mercilessly through a whole scene, more ecstasy. If Mme. Barrientos emits delicate little pings and executes upon the last of them a diminuendo closing in an almost inaudible pianissimo, rapture. But if any one just sings and sings and sings and sings and sings, for example, in Mozart, then follows that polite ripple of hands signifying, "We do this because it is the custom and because we sympathize with your effort to make something out of nothing."

The question for extremes is one of the most potent enemies of real art. The composers are its most lamentable victims. Listening to the new cantata of Deems Taylor at the Schola Cantorum concert on Tuesday evening T. S. Eliot's chronicler could only feel that a music which is so utterly ungrateful to everything resembling strong, straight, simple utterance. For the work had quality and a man who can create quality ought to be able to do something better than to make a gorgeous parade of technical device. But undoubtedly Mr. Taylor would find himself in difficulties if he abandoned his complicated machinery. He might learn that his ideas were stripped of their elaborate costumes presented emaciated figures to the story stage of the public.

Mr. Stojewski's "Traveler for Poland" rested even more heavily on technical artifice than Mr. Taylor's cantata. But the point to be made at this moment is that these two musicians did only what all the others are doing. They are not alone in this. They are all using the same method. It is an opportunity to remember the words of Schumann on Meyerbeer:

"I do not blame the use of every means in the right place, but we must not expect to hear when a dozen drums, trumpets and cymbals are heard at a little distance in unison with a hundred singing men. One Meyerbeerian refinement I must mention here. He knows the public too well not to know that an excess of noise is never heard. How cleverly he goes to work then. After such explosions as that mentioned above he gives us whole arias with the accompaniment of a single instrument as if he meant to say: Behold what I can do with but small means. Look, Germans, look! Some spirit he possesses we cannot deny, but time will not allow us to go through every detail of Meyerbeer's original tendency. His extreme non-originality and want of style are as well known as his talent in dramatic treatment. His polish, brilliancy, instrumental cleverness, as well as his very considerable variety in forms."

And the pity of this searching criticism by one of the greatest music critics of our time is that Meyerbeer was wanting in ideas and rich in facts, that he catered richly to the public taste for extremes and extravagance, but that he had no style. All of which is recognized as gospel truth in these days.

But in an age of neurotic excitement, when eager haste is the tempo of national life and the gratification of physical appetite the summit of desire, is it any wonder that art has exploded into fireworks? It makes some of us glad to hear that there is from time to time some one like Paul Manly who worships in the temple of pure beauty and brings back into this turbulent period something of the repose and purity of Grecian thought.

Why does not some one do something in music that is just beautiful and not astounding or shocking or overwhelming? Has the search after the beautiful ended? Or is it merely that just now we have only mechanics and no inventors?

Large matters are preparing in the domain of music. First of all, there is to be an official recognition of the fact that there is a Shakespeare centering in the country in a generation on next Wednesday evening at the Metropolitan Opera House. The work was first produced on October 11, 1874, in the Opera House at Manhattan, of which Arthur Bodanzky, who has released and will conduct the opera here, was musical director before coming to America. General Manager Gatti-Casazza has had James Fox of the scenic department of the Metropolitan Opera House reproduce the scenery painted by Ludwig Sivert for the Marienborg Opera House's most recent production of this opera.



FLONZALEY QUARTET.
 AEOLIAN HALL
 TUESDAY EVENING,
 MARCH 14.



MRS. KENNEDY-FRASER and MISS KENNEDY-FRASER "SONGS OF THE HEBRIDES." AEOLIAN HALL, THURSDAY EVENING.

"Folks" again, but possibly Mr. Scott, who is the impersonator of the fat knight, will not be well enough to undertake such an arduous role before the close of the season. "Otello" has never been very popular and the company contains no tenor to sing the title role.

Outside the domain of opera, preparations are under way for a New York production of Gustav Mahler's eighth symphony. The composition has been given in Philadelphia and great popular excitement. Sold out houses and demands for numerous repetitions are reported. All the forces, including the Philadelphia Orchestra and its conductor, Leopold Stokowski, will be brought to this city for the concert to be given under the protection of the Society of the Friends of Music. The concert will be given at the Metropolitan Opera House. It is a fact that the trip will cost about \$12,000. This makes it inconceivable that the symphony will be worth hearing. But what a pity Mahler could not have had the money!

CONCERTS, RECITALS, NOTES OF MUSIC.

The last pair of concerts here of the season of the Boston Symphony Orchestra will take place in Carnegie Hall next Thursday evening, March 16, and Saturday afternoon, March 18. Thursday evening Anton Weik, the concert master of the orchestra, will appear as soloist, playing the rarely heard concerto, "In Hungarian Style" for violin and orchestra, by Josef Joachim. The orchestra numbers will be Beethoven's overture to "Leonore" No. 1, Schumann's symphony No. 1. The programme for Saturday afternoon includes the rarely heard "Concertante Symphonie" of Mozart for violin and viola, the solo instruments being played by the orchestra. Following this concert the orchestra will play Beethoven's symphony No. 2, Brahms's "Academic Festival" overture and Wagner's prelude to "Die Meistersinger."

Fritz Kreisler and Pablo Casals will again play Brahms's double concerto for violin, viola and orchestra with the Symphony Society at Carnegie Hall this afternoon. The orchestra numbers to be heard are the Bachanale from "Tannhauser," Wagner, Paris version, and the symphonic poem "Death and Transfiguration" by Richard Strauss.

The Symphony Society's final concert in New York for the present season will be given at Carnegie Hall on Wednesday afternoon, March 15, with Joseph Hoffman as soloist. At this concert Mr. Hoffman will play Beethoven's "Emperor" concerto for piano with orchestra and a group of solos for piano. The orchestra will play Tchaikovsky's "Pathétique" symphony, No. 6, and the entire New York Symphony Orchestra, with its conductor, Walter Damrosch, and Joseph Hoffman as soloist, will leave New York for a tour of ten weeks, covering 8,000 miles, to the Pacific coast and back. During this period the orchestra will give seventy concerts in over sixty cities of the United States.

This afternoon the final performance of "Saturday last," writes a local critic, "in the auditorium of the M. E. Church at Palmyra, N. Y., music lovers in the community were given a rare treat by the Chapel Quartet. Miss Sarah Tomlinson, contralto, sang her way into the hearts of her listeners, for she possessed a voice of wide range and clearness. This quartet, of which Miss Tomlinson is a member, has been giving a series of recitals in the community, and is doing so with great success. The quartet consists of Miss Tomlinson, pianist, and Mr. Glinski, violinist, who contributed to the programme, also were enthusiastically received."

GRACE LA RUE COSTUME RECITAL OF SONGS LONGACRE THEATRE, THIS EVENING.

MARIE RAPPOLD, WHO WILL SING AIDA TOMORROW EVENING

of its Brooklyn season will be given by the Philharmonic at the Brooklyn Academy of Music. The chief programme number selected to meet many requests is the "Pathétique" symphony of Tchaikovsky.

Directly after this concert the orchestra will leave on its Western tour, to return in time for its two all Wagner programme concerts on Wednesday evening, March 22, and the afternoon of March 24. The Philharmonic Society will close its New York season on Sunday afternoon, March 26, at Carnegie Hall with a request programme.

The fourth and last subscription concert of the Russian Symphony Society will take place on Saturday evening, March 18, at Carnegie Hall. Scriabin's second symphony, Glazunov's "Overture on Russian Themes" and an adaptation for orchestra of Rachmaninov's suite for two pianos called "Fantasy Tableaux," as made by Modest Aluchin, the director of the society, are numbers in the list, as is also the "Pathétique" symphony of Tchaikovsky, which forms the second part of the programme. The soloist will be Sinding, a violinist, a performer on the symphony, who will be heard in several numbers of interest.

Eddy Brown will give his fourth violin recital in Aeolian Hall this afternoon. The programme, which will be popular in Russian style, includes: Sinding's "Spring Song," Tchaikovsky's "Paganini-Brown," Couperin, Saar-Brown and Razin.

Grace La Rue, in a costume recital of modern songs, sung in English, will be heard for the first time in New York this evening at the Longacre Theatre.

Following are the programmes for Samuel A. Baldwin's free organ recitals at the City Church this week: Today, at 4 o'clock, prelude in E minor, Bach; Mendelssohn's "Reverie" for organ, No. 7; Widor, Vision; Heineberger, Intermzzo; Brahms, Capriccio; Haydn, "Am Meer"; Schubert, finale from "Fantasy" for organ; Tchaikovsky, "Andante" for organ; Schumann, "Spring Song" for organ; and Berlioz's "Queen Mary" scherzo.

The Musical Art Society, which gives its annual Easter concert in Carnegie Hall on Tuesday evening, March 14, will present a programme of much interest. Chief among its numbers are a motet of Bach, which will demand, in addition to the services of the society, the choir of St. John the Divine and the services of the New York Symphony Orchestra. Like treatment will be accorded Percy Grainger's "The Merry Wedding," which will be heard here for the first time. The choir and the symphony orchestra will also combine in Brahms's "Nunheue." Among the other selections to be heard are the Orpheus, sorcerer duet of Schwebel, the Tenebrae part of Victoria, the old German song "Christi Liden," arranged by Reichel, the O. P. H. by Liszt, and the madrigal "Sweet, Honey-suckle" by Wilbye.

pharm this season. Earl Tuckerman, barytone, and William Parson, pianist.

Robert Hamilton, a young American barytone, will give his first New York song recital in Aeolian Hall on the afternoon of March 15, at 3 o'clock. His programme includes interesting groups of songs by Brahms, Moussorgsky and Richard Strauss, also several numbers by German composers, and one song by Villiers Stanford.

Three compositions of Saint-Saens, the veteran French composer-pianist, who has been very instrumental in re-awakening among Parisian musicians, are in the programme for the benefit concert given next Wednesday night at Carnegie Hall on behalf of the war sufferers of the Paris Conservatoire. In spite of its being scheduled in the second week of Lent, this affair promises to be one of the most brilliant musical events of the season. Ignace Paderewski, Enrique Granados, the Flonzaley Quartet, Ernest Schelling, Sigismund Stojewski.

Julia Culp, at her third song recital in Aeolian Hall on Thursday afternoon, March 16, will sing a group of five sacred songs by Hugo Wolf, followed by a group of old international songs in Italian, English, French and German. Her accompanist will be one of six further numbers by Hugo Wolf.

Mrs. Marjory Kennedy-Fraser, author of "Songs of the Hebrides," who was placed upon the civil pension list of the British Government for her valuable work of rescuing from oblivion the folk songs of the people in the Isles off the west coast of Scotland, will, with her daughter, Patrica Kennedy-Fraser, give her first public recital here of "Songs of the Hebrides" in Aeolian Hall, Thursday evening, March 16. Grace La Rue, who has been giving her first public recital here of "Songs of the Hebrides" in Aeolian Hall, Thursday evening, March 16, will sing a group of five sacred songs by Hugo Wolf, followed by a group of old international songs in Italian, English, French and German. Her accompanist will be one of six further numbers by Hugo Wolf.

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CONCERTS OF THE WEEK.
SUNDAY—Symphony Society, Carnegie Hall, 3 P. M.
 Eddy Brown, violin recital, Aeolian Hall, 3 P. M.
 Grace La Rue, song recital, Longacre Theatre, 8:30 P. M.
 Opera concert, Metropolitan Opera House, 8:30 P. M.
 Hippodrome, Sousa's band, 8:30 P. M.
 Schelling, piano, 8:30 P. M.
MONDAY—Maude Fay, song recital, Aeolian Hall, 3 P. M.
TUESDAY—Musical Art Society, Carnegie Hall, 8:30 P. M.
 Symphony Club of New York, Harold Bauer, soloist, benefit Brearley League Cripple School, Aeolian Hall, 3 P. M.
 Flonzaley Quartet, Aeolian Hall, 8:15 P. M.
WEDNESDAY—Symphony Society, Carnegie Hall, 3 P. M.
 Concert for benefit of musicians and members of Paris Conservatoire, Carnegie Hall, 8:15 P. M.
 Robert Hamilton, barytone, Aeolian Hall, 3 P. M.
THURSDAY—Boston Symphony Orchestra, Carnegie Hall, 8:15 P. M.
 Julia Culp, song recital, Aeolian Hall, 3 P. M.
 Mrs. Kennedy-Fraser and Miss Kennedy-Fraser, "Folk Songs of the Hebrides," Aeolian Hall, 8:15 P. M.
FRIDAY—Gertrude Hale, soprano, Aeolian Hall, 8:15 P. M.
SATURDAY—Boston Symphony Orchestra, Carnegie Hall, 2:30 P. M.
 Russian Symphony Society, Carnegie Hall, 8:15 P. M.
 Harold Bauer and Ossip Gabrilowitsch, joint recital, Aeolian Hall, 3 P. M.

"The Wild Swan." "Island Shelling Song." "An Island Tragedy." and "Croons to a small Celtic Harp." as "The Wild Swan," in Gaelic, and the "Heaven's Song."
 The song recital by Gertrude Hale, soprano, which was to have taken place on Thursday evening, February 17, but was postponed owing to the illness of the singer, will be given on Friday evening, March 17, in Aeolian Hall. The programme includes old Italian airs and songs by Schubert, Schumann, Brahms, Hugo Wolf, Tchaikowsky, Kramer, Bauer, Kreisler, Salter and Ross.
 John McCormack's next New York recital will be given at Carnegie Hall Sunday afternoon, March 19.
 A new song, "The Goddess in the Garden," written for him by Enrique Granados, the composer of "Goyescas," and the "Kashmir Song," also written for him by Harry T. Burleigh, will be special features of the programme. The latter is from the "Indian Love Lyrics" of Lawrence Hope.

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